

Name of Library: Seattle Public Library

Address of Central Library: 1000 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104

Number of Branch Libraries: Central Library
Plus 23 Branch libraries
Talking Book & Braille Library
Mobile Services



Management: Deborah L. Jacobs has been City Librarian since 1997.

Deborah L. Jacobs began her career as a children's librarian. She came to Seattle in 1997 from Corvallis, Oregon where she served as library director of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library. There she built a new central library ahead of schedule and under budget. She successfully championed increased funding for libraries across Oregon and gained national attention for building library services and connecting with the community.

Under Jacobs' leadership, The Seattle Public Library Foundation has raised an unprecedented \$82 million for library construction and endowments. More than 22,000 people have made donations to the Foundation, including gifts of \$22.5 million from Paul Allen and \$20 million from Bill and Melinda Gates. (Paul Allen and Bill Gates grew up using the North East Branch of the Seattle Public Library.)

Jacobs has received many awards that honor her commitment to substantively engaging the community while providing bold and decisive leadership. In 2004, Engineering News Record named her Newsmaker of the Year for "engaging citizens and inspiring designers." In 2003, she was named an honorary member of the Seattle American Institute of Architects. In 2001, Jacobs was named one of Governing Magazine's Public Officials of the Year, becoming the first librarian ever to receive the honor. She also was named Intellectual Freedom Champion of the Year by the Oregon Library Association and Librarian of the Year by the Library Journal.

Jacobs has a master's degree in library science from the University of Oregon and a bachelor's degree in government from Mills College.

Number of Public Computer Workstations: 400 in new Central Library

Number of Volumes in collection: The Seattle Public Library has a collection of approximately 2,000,000 items.

General Statistics

- 1,027,488 reference questions answered
- 57,165 people attended children's programs at the Temporary Central Library and neighborhood libraries
- 24,799 people attended adult and young adult events at the Temporary Central Library, neighborhood libraries and Mobile Services
- 3,985 people attended programs presented by the Washington Center for the Book
- 511 people attended community meetings presented by the Libraries for All capital program office in advance of the renovations and rebuilding.

Circulation:

- 2,670,113 adult books circulated
- 1,320,468 children's books circulated
- 1,817,317 other media circulated

Opening Day - May 23, 2004: 25,631 patrons; 9,231 checkouts; 487 library cards issued. The library has averaged between 10,000 and 16,000 people per day. (The library expected 8,000 people a day.) More than 1.5 million people visited the Library between opening day and the end of 2004.

During the month of December 2004, door count was 287,700, a 416 percent increase over the previous December. Each month since opening has seen an average 55 - 60 percent increase in materials borrowed, with the exception of August when circulation increased 104 percent.

The Central Library signed up more than 39,000 people for Library cards between opening day and the end of the year.



Facility: On Nov. 3, 1998, Seattle approved the \$196.4 million “Libraries for All” bond measure to upgrade The Seattle Public Library with new facilities, technology and books. The bond money, which could be used only for construction of libraries, funded the construction of the new Central Library and the renovation of branches. At the time, this was then the largest library bond issue ever before submitted in the United States; it won an unprecedented 69 percent approval from voters.

Twenty-nine major national, international and local firms sought the opportunity to design the Central Library. The Library Board's architectural choice for the project was Rem Koolhaas and his Office for Metropolitan Architecture in Rotterdam, in partnership with the Seattle firm of LMN Architects. The Dutch architect had no major buildings built in America when the Library Board selected him over two other finalists, but the board's choice seemed insightful a year later when Koolhaas was awarded architecture's highest international honor, the Pritzker Prize.

The new Central Library opened at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 23, 2004. Nearly 26,000 people visited the building on its first day of operation. The Central Library offer tours in both Spanish and English. This 362,987 square-foot library replaced the 206,000-square-foot library, which opened in 1960 at the same location. In January 2005, the Central Library received the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honor Award for Outstanding Architecture.

The Central Library has: 11 floors; underground parking; spacious areas for children and young adults; a four-level "books spiral" to house the bulk of the non-fiction collection in a continuous run; an auditorium; a floor called the "mixing chamber" that contains information desks where patrons can ask librarians for help; multilingual and English-as-a-second-language areas; a coffee cart; and an exterior "skin" of insulated glass on a steel structure.

The total budget was \$165.5 million, including \$10 million for the Temporary Central Library. The art budget for the new central library was \$899,101.

Technology: Seattle has a cutting edge materials sorting and handling system and a high tech reference model. The Seattle Public Library replaced its more than 20-year-old computer catalog with a new system called "Horizon" in February, 2005. To help ensure confidentiality and protect patron privacy, the new system does not track yearly holds placed by patrons. The Horizon system provides:

- Improved search and page loading times
- A better interface for Central Library users with visual disabilities
- Really Simple Syndication, RSS, which allows search feeds e.g. new titles from favorite authors
- Icons that clearly display the type of material (book, DVD, book on CD, etc.)

Citizens can reserve a computer up to seven days in advance on the library's website. The maximum time is one hour per day across the library system.

Programs: Dance, film, story telling and music are part of the library's special offerings. Programs are often arranged thematically. For example, special screenings of classic Frankenstein movies followed days later by a discussion led by Kurt Andersen, host of "Studio 360" on Public Radio International, on "The Persistence of Frankenstein: Art, Science and Creation" a best-selling author, a professor of anthropology from the region and a Seattle artist who explores these themes in her work.

- An example of the kind of special outreach the library does to Seattle immigrant and non-English speaking communities is a public announcement that Seattle's Slavic-speaking community can receive library assistance in their native language thanks to the outreach efforts of a Polish- and Russian-speaking librarian--who also can communicate in any Slavic language.
- Each year the Washington Center for the Book at the Seattle Public Library hosts a major author for a series of free programs. Citizens are invited to participate in "Seattle Reads" by reading the featured selection, joining in a book group discussion and attending the programs. "Seattle Reads" is now an annual program series of the Washington Center for the Book.

"Seattle Reads Julie Otsuka's, "When the Emperor Was Divine" as part of "Reading Across the Map," a multi-year project to foster reading and discussion of works by authors from diverse cultures and ethnicities, made possible in part by the Wallace Foundation. Julie Otsuka will visit Seattle May 2-5 for the 2005 "Seattle Reads" series. Previous years included seven titles from Isabel Allende's body of work; "A Gesture Life" by Chang-rae Lee; 2002: "Wild Life" by Molly Gloss; "Fooling With Words: A Celebration of Poets and Their Craft" by Bill Moyers; "A Lesson Before Dying" by Ernest Gaines; "The Sweet Hereafter" by Russell Banks.

- The library offers free tax assistance.
- The Central Library school tour program began in late October, brought in 50 school groups totaling more than 1,000 students to visit the Central Library and meet with children's and teen librarians.

Governance: The Library is governed by a five-member citizens' board of trustees, appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Board members serve five-year terms without pay. The board meets monthly and each member serves on one committee.

Collection Development: The Seattle Public Library has a collection of approximately 2,000,000 items. The collection includes books, audio books, music CDs, videos and DVDs, books in large type, and magazines and newspapers - for all ages. The Library also subscribes to numerous online databases including a small collection of ebooks. Ebooks are listed in the Seattle Public Library's online catalog.

The Seattle Public Library has five specialized collections: the Seattle Collection of local history materials; the Genealogy Collection enabling Seattle residents to research their American family history; the Aviation History Collection recording aviation from its birth to the present, especially focusing on the period from 1930 to 1950; and the Washington Author Collection showcasing books by Washington authors - all housed at the Central Library. The African-American Collection at the Douglass-Truth Branch includes material on the African-American experience in the United States especially in the Northwest.

Staffing and Personnel: 600 staff members (442 full-time equivalents) Trained docents and staff have led 20,000 people from more than 741 countries (Brazil, Belgium, Australia, Philippines, Poland, Tahiti, Taiwan, South Africa, Thailand United Kingdom, Cyprus, India, Ireland and others) on tours since opening day through 2004.

Volunteers: Working under the supervision of Library staff, volunteers help with collections, mailings and special events; assist students with homework; provide instruction to new adult learners and those who have limited access to or experience with computer technology; and assist with special projects and community events. Prospective volunteers complete a written application and a phone interview.

Fundraising: The Seattle Public Library Foundation was established in 1980, the Foundation generates private-sector support to supplement tax-based funding. The President of Friends of Seattle Public Library is on the board of the Foundation.

Recently, the United Way of King County conducted an administrative review of the Foundation. They evaluated the Foundation's infrastructure, board of directors, personnel, resource stability and fiscal systems. The Foundation received a high rating of 3.8 out of a possible 4.0.

To ensure the efficient use of private funds, the Foundation has established a Financial and Investment Committee to:

- Provide financial oversight for the accounting, management, and investment of all funds
- Arrange an annual audit conducted by a professional firm
- Establish an internal management control system
- Review and approve the proposed operating budget before presenting it to the board for adoption
- Monitor the use of restricted funds

Audits are conducted annually by Jacobson Jarvis, a top-rated accounting and consulting firm specializing in non-profit organizations, based in Seattle, Washington. Investments are made by a number of professional fund managers who have been carefully selected for their expertise.

The Friends of the Seattle Public Library: Since 1941, the Friends of the Seattle Public Library sponsors projects and expenditures that extend "beyond the command of the ordinary library budget." The Friends of the Seattle Public Library has a membership of 13,000. The Friends organization promotes awareness of the library in the community and raises money for library projects through the semi-annual book sales held in the spring and fall of each year. The Friends group also operates a retail shop at the Central Library.

Mission Statement of the Seattle Public Library:

Our mission is to become the best public library in the world by being so tuned in to the people we serve and so supportive of each other's efforts that we are able to provide highly responsive service. We strive to inform, enrich and empower every person in our community by creating and promoting easy access to a vast array of ideas and information, and by supporting an informed citizenry, lifelong learning and love of reading. We acquire organize and provide books and other relevant materials; ensure access to information sources throughout the nation and around the world; serve our public with expert and caring assistance; and reach out to all members of our community.

Aims

We intend to provide:

1. Services that are understood and valued by the community and result in library use and involvement from the broadest possible spectrum of residents.
2. A caring, welcoming and lively cultural and lifelong learning center for the community.
3. Outstanding reference, readers' advisory and borrower services that are barrier free for users of all ages, regardless of ethnic background, educational level, economic status or physical condition.
4. Collections of enduring value and contemporary interest that are relevant to user needs and readily accessible from every service point.
5. A highly trained and competent staff that reflects the rich diversity of our community and that works together to provide responsive service to all users.
6. Appropriate technology to extend, expand and enhance services in every neighborhood and ensure that all users have equitable access to information.
7. Facilities that are inviting, safe and well maintained and that are available during hours of greatest convenience to users and equitably distributed throughout the City.
8. Careful stewardship of the public trust, which ensures accountability and makes the most efficient and effective use of funds, both public and private; fosters collaboration, cooperation and co-location where possible with other agencies; and builds public/private partnerships to enhance services to our users.

Seattle Public Library Organizational Values

1. Service to our users is our reason for being. Those who need us most should be our highest priority.
2. All employees, volunteers and friends of the Library are valued as human beings and for their important contributions to our service.
3. We are a learning organization that is open, collegial, and risk-taking; we nurture our talents and each other and constantly reassess our services and methods to adapt to the changing needs of our community.

4. We support and defend intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of borrowers' and inquirers' use of the Library.
5. All Library services are provided in a nonpartisan and non-judgmental manner that is sensitive to and supportive of human differences.
6. Both staff and patrons are encouraged to laugh often and out loud.

Timeline Seattle Central Library:

- July 2004: The Seattle Public Library Board of trustees selected a third artist to create permanent artwork as part of the “Library Unbound” project.
- May 2004: The Central Library opened at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 23. Nearly 26,000 people visited the building on its first day of operation.
- January 2004: Glass exterior installation completed. Overall construction 91 percent completed. The Library Board selected two artists to create permanent artwork as part of the “Library Unbound” project.
- November 2003: The Central Library received its first award – a Steel Design Award of Excellence from the British Columbia Region of the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction for innovative use of steel.
- June 2003: The Library Board selected four artists to present proposals for permanent artworks as part of the “Library Unbound” project.
- May 2003: On May 7, workers raised the last piece of structural steel (a four-ton piece of seismic grid steel) topped by the traditional tree and American flag. Construction 50 percent completed.
- December 2002: Steel erection began. The steel structure will support the insulated glass and metal mesh exterior “skin.” Subcontractor bidding substantially completed.
- October 2002: Concrete structure completed. Permitting completed.
- July 2002: Construction 13 percent completed.
- April 2002: Excavation and shoring work completed.
- March 2002: Construction documents completed.
- October 2001: Construction crews finished salvaging and recycling interior materials.
- September 2001: Contractors finished removing asbestos and other hazardous materials.
- August 2001: Contractors completed the final **landscape removal plan**, the first visible sign of the start of demolition.
- June 8, 2001: The existing Central Library at 1000 Fourth Ave. closed for good to make way for construction of a bold and exciting new facility. The Library began moving its books and materials to a temporary location at 800 Pike St.
- May 2001: Hundreds of people attended an open house to see images of the final design of the new library and learn more about how the innovative building will look and function.
- March 2001: The Library and its architects finished the design of the new Central Library.
- February 2001: William B. Meyer Inc. was hired to move the books, furniture and equipment from the Central Library to temporary quarters at 800 Pike St.

- Throughout 2000: Members of 37 Library staff work groups gave architects feedback on the library design.
- December 2000: The Library Board selected four artists to propose artwork to be integrated into the new library.
- September 2000: Library users tested mock-ups of two "books spiral" floor designs to house the library's non-fiction collection in a continuous run. The Library Board selected Jessica Cusick and Rick Lowe to be art planners, following the recommendation of an advisory committee that evaluated 14 applications.
- May 2000: Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture reviewed progress on the library design for 1,500 people at a public presentation at Benaroya Hall. The Library Board selected Hoffman Construction Co. to be general contractor/construction manager. Four firms applied for the job.
- January 2000: Members of the public joined 10 work groups - including services for children, older adults, young adults and people with disabilities - to share their hopes and dreams for the new library.
- December 1999: More than 1,000 people attended public events at which architect Rem Koolhaas described his early vision for the library.
- May 1999: The Library Board selected architect Rem Koolhaas and Seattle-based LMN Architects to jointly design the new library after 1,700 people attended presentations put on by three finalists. An advisory panel reviewed the qualifications of the 29 firms that applied for the job. The Library selected The Seneca Group to be project manager. Ten firms applied for the job.
- November 1998: Seattle voters passed the \$196.4 million "Libraries for All" bond measure, which included money to build a new central library on the existing site at 1000 Fourth Avenue.